

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 MADRID 09124 021857Z

16
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13

/072 W

----- 090581

R 021132Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8172
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION NATO
USEC BRUSSELS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MADRID 9124

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, ELAB, SP
SUBJECT: CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS: SPANISH EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE

SUMMARY. PUBLIC ATTENTION FOCUSED ON THE POLITICAL
IMPLICATIONS OF THE 25TH ASSEMBLY OF THE SPANISH EPISCOPAL
CONFERENCE (SEC) AND SPECIFICALLY ON CARDINAL TARANCON'S
OPENING ADDRESS AND THE FINAL COMMUNIQUE. THE CARDINAL
STRESSED THAT THE CHURCH MUST REMAIN INDEPENDENT OF
PARTISAN POLITICS. WITH REFERENCE TO THE APPROACHING
DECEMBER 15 REFERENDUM, THE COMMUNIQUE URGED BOTH GOVT AND
CITIZENS TO FULFILL THEIR DUTIES IN GOOD CONSCIENCE.
CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS HAVE MELLOWED TO THE POINT WHERE
THE BISHOPS' MEETINGS NO LONGER ARE TENSE AFFAIRS ACCENTUATING
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 MADRID 09124 021857Z

WHAT USED TO BE THE CHURCH'S ADVERSARY ROLE VIS-A-VIS THE

EXCESSES OF THE FRANCO REGIME. END SUMMARY.

1. THE 25TH ASSEMBLY OF THE SEC TOOK PLACE IN MADRID NOVEMBER 22-27 WITH 70 OF THE 84 MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE. ALTHOUGH THE BULK OF THE AGENDA DEALT WITH STRICTLY ECCLESIASTICAL AND PASTORAL MATTERS, PUBLIC ATTENTION QUITE UNDERSTANDABLY FOCUSED ON THOSE PROCEEDINGS WHICH HAD POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS. THUS, CARDINAL TARANCON'S (ARCH-BISHOP OF MADRID AND PRESIDENT OF THE SEC) OPENING ADDRESS AND A COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE CLOSING SESSION RECEIVED SPECIAL NOTICE (SEE BELOW). MSGR. DADAGLIO, THE PAPAL NUNCIO, RECALLING IN HIS GREETING TO THE BISHOPS THAT IT WAS EXACTLY NINE YEARS AGO THAT HE HAD PARTICIPATED IN HIS FIRST SEC ASSEMBLY, DECLARED: "SINCE THEN, WE HAVE TRAVELED A LONG ROAD TOGETHER---I BELIEVE THAT WE CAN ASSERT THAT THE SPANISH CHURCH HAS FULFILLED ITS MISSION DURING THOSE YEARS NOT ONLY WITH DIGNITY, BUT ALSO WITH POSITIVE EFFECT." HE ALSO ALLUDED TO THE PRESENCE OF SIX NEW BISHOPS RECENTLY APPOINTED DIRECTLY BY THE POPE (RATHER THAN BY THE GOS), MAKING THE POINT THAT THIS WAS A HAPPY SYMBOL OF COOPERATION BETWEEN CHURCH AND STATE AS A RESULT OF THE SPANISH-VATICAN ACCORD SIGNED LAST JULY (MADRID 5886).

2. THE PRINCIPAL POINTS OF THE LAST PART OF CARDINAL TARANCON'S ADDRESS-DEALING WITH "THE CURRENT SPANISH SITUATION" - ARE HIGHLIGHTED BELOW. THE CHURCH DOES NOT WISH TO, CANNOT, SHOULD NOT, BE TIED TO ANY POLITICAL PARTY. LET IT BE KNOWN THAT THE HIERARCHY HAS NOT PARTICIPATED IN THE INSPIRATION AND CHANNELLING OF SO-CALLED CHRISTIAN MOVEMENTS OR PARTIES. HOWEVER, TARANCON NOTED, WE ARE FACED WITH THE FOLLOWING FACTS: A) SOME PARTIES DO IDENTIFY THEMSELVES AS "CHRISTIAN"; B) OTHERS, THOUGH NOT USING THE LABEL, WISH TO JUSTIFY THEIR EXTREMISM - INCLUDING VIOLENCE - FOR RELIGIOUS REASONS (PROBABLY A REFERENCE TO RIGHTWING GOON SQUADS); C) ONE APOSTOLIC GROUP HAS AIRED THE ADVANTAGES OF A CHRISTIAN TRADE UNION, WHILE OTHER APOSTOLIC GROUPS HAVE REACTED ALMOST ANGRILY TO SUCH A SUGGESTION; AND D) SOME REVOLUTIONARY POLITICAL GROUPS WISH TO LEAN ON THE GOSPEL AND EVEN INCLUDE SOME PRIESTS IN THEIR RANKS. THESE REALITIES ARE PRODUCING CONFUSION AMONG CATHOLICS AND EVEN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 MADRID 09124 021857Z

PROVOKE DIVISIONS AMONG PRIESTS. THE PRESENCE OF PRIESTS IN POLITICAL MOVEMENTS - INCLUDING EXTREMIST ONES - RAISES GRAVE PROBLEMS. AFTER NOTING THAT CERTAIN ISSUES (SCHOOLING, MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, ETC) CAN BECOME POLITICAL FOOTBALLS, TARANCON WARNED THAT THE CHURCH HAS A GREAT SOCIAL FORCE, ESPECIALLY IN SPAIN, WHICH COULD ALL TOO EASILY BE CONVERTED INTO SUPPORT FOR PARTISAN POSITIONS.

3. A TWO-PART SEC COMMUNIQUE DEALING WITH 1) PASTORAL OBJECTIVES AND 2) THE CURRENT SITUATION, WAS ISSUED ON NOVEMBER 27. WITH REFERENCE TO THE APPROACHING REFERENDUM OF DECEMBER 15 (MADRID 8925), THE BISHOPS STRESSED THE MORAL CONSIDERATIONS WHICH BOTH THE GOVERNMENT AND THE CITIZENS SHOULD BE CONSCIOUS OF. THE GOVT SHOULD ALLOW AMPLE OPPORTUNITY FOR THE EXPRESSION OF DIVERSE VIEWS - INCLUDING ACCESS TO PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA - AND SHOULD ASSURE THAT THE VOTING TAKE PLACE IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF TRUTH AND LIBERTY. WITH RESPECT TO THE VOTING PUBLIC, CITIZENS HAVE THE OBLIGATION OF INFORMING THEMSELVES FULLY ON THE CONTENTS AND MEANING OF THE PROPOSED REFERENDUM.

4. COMMENT. AS ONE WELL-INFORMED OBSERVER PUT IT IN THE MORARCHIST ABC, THIS LATEST SEC ASSEMBLY WAS NEITHER OBSESSED WITH POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS, NOR FAR REMOVED FROM TODAY'S REALITIES, CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS HAVE MELLOWED TO THE POINT WHERE THE BISHOPS' MEETINGS NO LONGER ARE TENSE AFFAIRS ACCENTUATING WHAT USED TO BE THE CHURCH'S ADVERSARY ROLE VIS-A-VIS THE EXCESSES OF THE FRANCO REGIME. THE BISHOPS ARE REPORTEDLY JUST AS HAPPY NOT TO BE MAKING POLITICAL "NEWS." THE SPANISH CHURCH IS NOW PUSHING IN A BUSINESSLIKE MANNER FOR THE SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE, A CONDITION MORE IN KEEPING WITH SPAIN'S MOVE TOWARD POLITICAL REFORM AND DEMOCRATIZATION. STABLER

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CHURCH STATE RELATIONS, MEETINGS, RELIGIOUS LEADERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976MADRID09124
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760447-0842
From: MADRID
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761279/aaaacqmn.tel
Line Count: 140
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 APR 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <06 APR 2004 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS: SPANISH EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE SUMMARY. PUBLIC ATTENTION FOCUSED ON THE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE 25TH ASSEMBLY OF THE SPANISH E
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, ELAB, SP
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006